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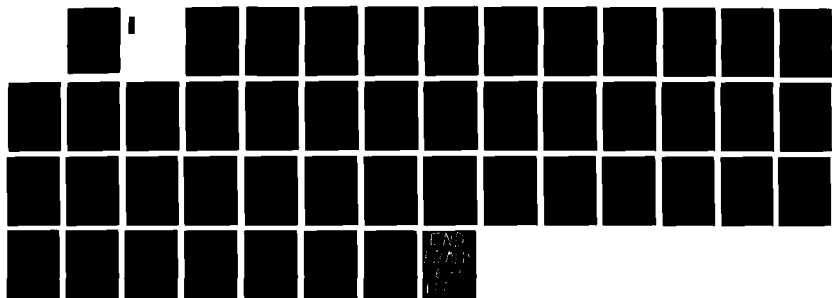
THE DRUG WAR DOWN SOUTH: GAINING MORAL ASCENDENCY IN
THE AMERICAS(U) ARMY WAR COLL CARLISLE BARRACKS PA
T J BARRETT 06 APR 89

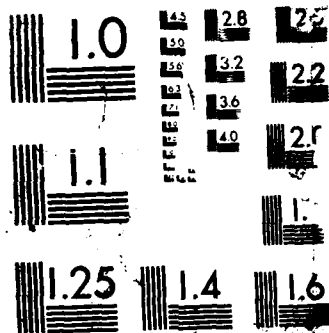
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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

THE DRUG WAR DOWN SOUTH:
GAINING MORAL ASCENDENCY IN THE AMERICAS

An Individual Study Project
Intended for Publication

by

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ABSTRACT

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Suppression of illicit drug trafficking in source and transit countries in the Americas has been an important part of the U.S. war on drugs. It is a part of the war we are losing. U.S. supported efforts to block production and shipment of illicit drugs are a failure. Drug trafficking in the Americas is flourishing and CIA estimates indicate non-stop expansion of the coca industry. This study reviews counter-drug programs in our hemisphere and proposes a revised U. S. strategy. To forge a new strategy the study considers centers of gravity, the imperatives of low intensity conflict, and the "remarkable trinity" of the government, the commander and the army, and the people which according to Clausewitz defines the character of any "war". The study suggests U.S. strategic objectives should emphasize support for democracy and economic development and eliminate crop eradication and certain other anti-drug initiatives. A revamped role for the U.S. military stressing foreign internal defense and nation building is also proposed. The over-arching goal is to gain moral ascendancy in the drug war in the Americas.

INTRODUCTION
THE UNPLEASANT REALITY

Contrast these images:

One from the capital of the United States:

'For the first 40 days of this year there was a total of 44 murders in the District of Columbia,' he wrote. 'That is more than a death a day. Seventy percent of them were drug related. Among this number, teenagers are the victims and the criminals.'

The article was published posthumously in March. Mr. Harris, a 17 year-old senior who planned to study journalism at the University of Colorado, was slain March 12. The authorities say the suspect in his death tested positive for cocaine and PCP use./1

Another from Colombia, South America:

Medellin. Nestled among mountains, blessed with eternal spring, it's a textile and fashion center and home to many in the higher echelons of the cocaine trade. Some younger aspirants, already millionaires, can be found at Kevins, a discotheque overlooking the brightly lit city. One just checked his gun at the door.

Next day I see Fabio Ochoa Restrepo - father of the reputed billionaire Jorge Ochoa Vasquez - enjoying himself at a suburban horse show at Envigado. Those are Paso Fino horses with a four-beat lateral gait so smooth that riding one is said to be like riding on a cloud. Don Fabio, white-haired and grotesquely fat but an excellent equestrian, watches one prize after another go to his horses. I'm told he has 500 of them at his nearby breeding farm alone, each with its own groom.

Everyone here knows who the big cocaine traffickers are. People call them majicos, the magicians, and you don't mess with them./2

The aspiring journalist was 17; he was an honor student and worked after school. He could have been the boy next door, or your son. He was murdered in a business district of the capital of the United States. His killer used cocaine.

In truth the man who shot him was not the only one responsible for the teenager's death. But few "majicos" are held to account for the suffering they spawn. Neither their own governments nor the United States - with its wealth, mastery of technology, military power, and campaign against drugs - has been able to make substantial inroads into the "majicos" lucrative trade or make them pay for their crimes. Teenagers in America die from overdoses and guns, but the "majicos" and their businesses are secure: "you don't mess with them."

We are losing the drug war down south.

Suppression of drug trafficking in source and transit countries has been an important part of the U.S. war on drugs. But despite more money spent on crop eradication, more diplomatic attention to drug issues, more foreign-based DEA agents, more multi-national drug raids, more use of U.S. military assets to aid enforcement agencies, and genuinely heroic efforts by individual agents, U.S. supported efforts

to block production and shipment of illicit drugs in the Americas have been an overall failure.

The unpleasant reality is that the illicit drug industry in the Americas is flourishing. United States government assessments indicate supplies of illicit drugs are growing./3 Central Intelligence Agency estimates indicate non-stop expansion of the foreign coca industry, and a continued surplus of coca on the international market is likely for the foreseeable future./4 Discussing coca production in Peru, a recent staff report of the international narcotics task force of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee reported "massive new areas are being cleared for (coca) production. During some months, U.S. anti-narcotics aircraft cannot even fly due to the extensive smoke produced from the slash-and-burn techniques used to clear new land for coca production."/5

Adverse consequences of this expanding drug production extend well beyond an abundant supply of drugs for hometown America. Drug abuse is growing in Europe and third world countries. Heavily armed international drug cartels dealing in billions of dollars undermine governments through corruption, intimidation and economic destabilization. Drug trafficking supports insurgencies and threatens U.S. officials and citizens overseas with drug-related terrorism./6

Many explanations for the failure of U.S. supported programs to suppress drug production and trafficking in the Americas have been offered: bureaucratic infighting among law enforcement agencies, low priority to narcotics issues by diplomats, foreign perceptions of drugs as a problem of U.S. demand and not of foreign supply, and lack of resources to take on well-financed and sophisticated cartels./7

Numerous remedies have been tried, with more than a few "solutions" legislated over the last decade by a Congress increasingly frustrated by U.S. inability to shut down illicit drug production. Recent initiatives include creation of a federal drug "czar" to oversee anti-drug programs, stricter controls on precursor chemicals, and denying passports to convicted narcotics traffickers./8 To date, however, little seems to have changed in the lives of the "majicos."

This study reviews counter-drug strategy in hemispheric source and transit countries and proposes a revised strategy with a revamped role for U.S. armed forces. The proposal suggests we must:

- (1) redefine our strategic objectives, fully integrating counter-drug strategy in the Americas with other U.S. regional security objectives;

(2) take into better account the imperatives of low intensity conflict and the "remarkable trinity" of the people, the commander and his army, and the government which according to Clausewitz defines the character of any "war";

(3) target sources of enemy strength, and concentrate against those centers of gravity; and

(4) establish, together with each hemispheric ally, moral ascendancy over our common enemies.

Approaches to the drug war that ignore these precepts hold out no hope of victory. And when a "war" threatens our children, the security of the United States and the survival of democratic governments in our hemisphere, victory, not some muddled stalemate, is the only acceptable outcome./9

Two caveats should be kept in mind. First, this paper focuses on efforts to suppress illicit drug trafficking in source and transit countries. Demand reduction in the United States and interdiction of drugs near U.S. borders are also critical to a successful counter-drug strategy. However, those components are addressed only peripherally in this study. Second, the Americas are not the only source of illicit drugs imported into the United States. For example, the well-publicized Pizza-connection trial involved a conspiracy to smuggle \$1.6 billion of heroin bought in

Turkey, processed in Sicily, and transported into the United States, where it was distributed and its proceeds laundered through a string of pizza parlors./10 Illegal heroin is produced in Burma, Afghanistan, Iran, Mexico, Pakistan, Laos and Thailand. Cocaine flows from Peru, Bolivia, Columbia and Brazil; marijuana originates in Columbia, Jamaica, Mexico, Morocco and the United States./11 As drug-producing regions of the world go, however, the Americas are the most critical to U.S. interests. Most illegal drugs purchased in the United States are smuggled in from nations to our south. Drug source nations in the Americas are closest to our home, the direct source of our "crack" epidemic, and the most threatened by instability related to drug trafficking. Other regions of the world should not be overlooked. But if we cannot prevail against drug trafficking in the Americas, we will never cure the drug epidemic in the United States. We could also face an impoverished, undemocratic, unstable, and unfriendly continent to our south. Such a situation would damage the United States economically, strategically, and morally. We must prevent this impending disaster.

THE THREAT

"The aim of war should be what its very concept implies - to defeat the enemy."/12

The drug trafficking threat in the Americas is easy to describe but suprisingly difficult to understand.

The typical U.S. perspective on illicit drug production and trafficking is quantatative. The numbers are big and discouraging: more than 500,000 acres of cocoa under cultivation; three to four harvests a year; 200-400 tons of cocaine production annually, retail annual sales of \$22 billion dollars, with \$3-5 billion returning to the cartels and the rest going to middlemen./13 What successes are found in the drug war are also measured by statistics. In 1988 the Colombian National Police reported destroying 665 cocaine laboratories and 70 clandestine landing strips and confiscating 12 tons of pure cocaine, 2.5 tons of cocaine base, 86 tons of cocaine leaves, 839 tons of pressed marijuana, 1812 Kg of hasish and 6.92 tons of marijuana seed. Over 4800 local drug traffickers and 31 foreign ones were arrested./14 Those numbers reflect anti-drug activities for one year in one country at a time production seems to have expanded.

The statistical emphasis is promoted by Congress. Section 4491 of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 is titled "Expression in numerical terms of maximum achievable reductions in illicit drug production." The section requires presidential determinations for foreign aid certifications to be expressed in numerical terms, "such as the number of acres of illicitly cultivated controlled substances which can be eradicated."/¹⁵ One senses here some Congressional frustration in trying to quantify progress in the drug war.

Perhaps the frustration is rooted in the fact that "war" cannot be reduced to statistics. In any war, the fight is not against a problem; war engages an enemy, "an animate object that reacts."/¹⁶ Enemy reactions cannot be presumed and may not even be rational./¹⁷ Prevailing in war involves "will" as well as assets, and "will" can depend on political conditions or "elemental psychological factors that are difficult to quantify."/¹⁸ In 1968 the Tet offensive was a strategic success for North Vietnam, but that success would never have been apparent from the statistics of the battle, in which the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese took extremely heavy casualties. Their tactical defeat translated into a resounding strategic success because the American center of gravity was not the battlefield but "public opinion and the American political leadership"../¹⁹

We cannot afford to adopt a "body count" mentality in the drug war. Eradicating thousands of acres of coca means little if the will and means to plant elsewhere remain. Drug cartels, not fields of coca, are the enemy we must defeat. And the will of the drug lords to engage in trafficking is linked far more closely to how much money they make and how securely they sleep at night, than how many coca fields they must replant.

Centers of Gravity

One must keep the dominant characteristics of both belligerents in mind. Out of these characteristics a certain center of gravity develops, the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends. That is the point against which all our energies should be directed./20

Drug traffickers in the Americas have a number of characteristics we need to keep in mind as we develop a strategy to defeat them:

1. "The Color of Money"-

The motivation of drug traffickers is money; if drug lords couldn't accumulate great wealth quickly they wouldn't be in the drug business. Moreover, the influence of drug money extends well beyond the cartels. Drug money provides local area economies thousands of jobs that offer upward economic and social mobility from the extreme poverty which characterizes much of the continent.

In Bolivia more than one sixth of the population, 350,000 people, depends for its livelihood on the illicit coca trade./21 At the very top of the cartels personal power may be a secondary motivator, but "Yanqui Green" is the incentive that drives what Peru's President has termed "Latin America's only successful multinational."/22

2. "Tell me who your friends are ..."/23

Drug trafficking is linked with leftist insurgencies and has been connected to Cuba and Nicaragua. The strength of the connections can be argued but not their existence. In Colombia the insurgent group M-19 obtained guns through drug traffickers dealing with Cuba./24 The armed resistance of the Colombian communist party, Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Colombias(FARC), obtains funds from traffickers in exchange for protection and access to clandestine airfields the guerrillas control./25 In Peru 'Shining Path' Maoist guerrillas not only trade protection for drug money; the guerrillas exploit government crop eradication programs for propaganda, targeting peasants who lose income because their coca fields are destroyed./26 Senior members of Nicaragua's government have supported cocaine trafficking./27 Cuba has provided temporary sanctuary to drug

smugglers in exchange for cash and help running arms to M-19 guerrillas./28 There are also well-documented allegations that General Noriega in Panama, Castro, the M-19 guerillas and the Medellin cartel are linked in trafficking, gun-running and money laundering operations/29. The implication for regional counter-drug strategy is that drugs, insurgencies, communist regimes and their goals cannot be viewed in isolation. The relationships are symbiotic, so an approach that looks at one matter independent of the others will not work.

3. "Armed and Dangerous"

The larger cartels are well-organized, very heavily armed, have excellent intelligence and are completely ruthless. Their violence is extreme, even for countries that tolerate high levels of violence./30 On a human and political level the ruthlessness is devastating. Informers and opponents of the drug lords are murdered brutally. One-half of the Columbian Supreme Court, dozens of other judges, the attorney general, the editor of the country's second largest newspaper and thousands of police officers have been assassinated by drug traffickers./31 Local governments are

unable to provide meaningful protection to those who would take on the cartels.

4. "Popular Too"

The drug cartels are adept at portraying themselves as nationalists and benefactors of local poor through social good deeds. They spread around their money, providing housing for the poor and even soccer fields./32 They like to behave as Latin "Robin Hoods" who rob from rich Yanqui imperialists and then give to the Latin poor./33 This image makes the cartels surprisingly popular at home.

5. "Pieces of Silver"

Through bribery and threats drug cartels have corrupted the highest levels of some governments./34 Corruption at lower levels of government is pandemic throughout the hemisphere. Explaining some of the appeal of the 'Shining Path', one Peruvian noted the guerrillas are disciplined and don't steal, "not even a needle" -- in contrast to the police./35 The ultimate in high level corruption is in Panama where the de facto head of state, General Noriega, has been indicted on U.S. drug charges. The widespread

government corruption presents a sensitive diplomatic issue and a formidable obstacle to U.S. counter-drug efforts.

6. "Agile"

Flexibility has characterized the illicit drug trade. When one production field is eliminated, another springs up; when one factory is destroyed, another is built elsewhere; when one country cracks down, production moves cross-border; when one trafficker is captured and for some unusual reason can't get out of jail, another aspirant quickly takes his place in the money line;

7. "You don't mess with them"

The "majicos" are secure. While government officials who challenge major traffickers fear for their lives, the traffickers sleep soundly. Behind the shelter of bribes, intimidation, good intelligence and heavy armament, the cartels operate with impunity. They perceive little threat from their own governments which they see as weak, and they have generally been able to avoid U.S. justice. A recent U.S. news story which headlined "Medellin Gang Leaders, Bahamian Are Indicted" noted that "these and other cartel kingpins have

been indicted numerous times before, in many cases on essentially the same charges."/36

8. "Heritage"

Coca use, in the form of chewing of coca leaves, has been part of Andean culture for thousands of years./37 This makes counter-drug programs counter-cultural in some areas, as well as economically adverse to the local populace.

The overall assessment of the traffickers reveals well-financed, well-armed forces using terrorist tactics and linked to guerrilla movements. The traffickers have penetrated host governments and demonstrate operational initiative and flexibility. Their principal source of strength is economic - cash flow and accumulated wealth, bolstered by willingness to use terrorism to achieve and maintain it.

On the other hand, anti-drug forces are characterized by weak democratic host governments. These governments have political legitimacy but lack the confidence of their people. Poverty is rampant, inflation exploding and debt overwhelming. The democracies are threatened by insurgencies, corruption, and potential right wing reactions as well as by traffickers. The principal ally, the U.S., has

great wealth, a different culture, and emphasizes politically unpopular programs such as crop eradication.

REGIONAL STRATEGY ALTERNATIVES

One can postulate any number of alternative strategies for narcotics control in the Americas. Before examining them, however, the context in which they must function needs restating.

Key national interests of the United States include:

1. Survival as a free and independent nation, with its fundamental values intact and its people and institutions secure;
2. A healthy and growing economy to provide opportunity for individual prosperity and a resource base for our national endeavors;
3. A stable and secure world free of major threats to U.S. interests;
4. The growth of human freedom, democratic institutions and free market economies throughout the world, linked by a fair and open international trading system.
5. Healthy and vigorous alliance relationships./38

International drug trafficking directly threatens three of those five national interests(1,4,and 5). Omission of the others can be argued. Regional objectives and strategy must be consistent with these interests.

The present U.S. security strategy for the Americas calls for commitment to the interdependent regional objectives of democracy and freedom, peace and economic progress./39 Added to these is the objective of struggling against the "menace of drug production and trafficking, which poses threats not only to the integrity and stability of governments to our south, but to the social fabric of the United States itself."/40 This strategy directly supports the key U.S. national interests cited. Our regional counter-drug strategy should be fully consistent with these objectives, but in practice it is not.

The present U.S. international narcotics control goal is "improving international cooperation". Twenty-four nations in the Americas have programs to fight drug production and trafficking under U.S. initiatives, which include the following elements:

1. Law Enforcement Assistance Help to host nation police agencies in law enforcement operations through training, funding, equipment and the presence of U.S. drug enforcement agents to aid in

intelligence and investigations. Some of these operations, such as Operation Blast Furnace in Bolivia in 1986 and the on-going operation Snocap, are very large scale. U.S. military forces help this effort to a limited degree within the parameter of assisting law enforcement agencies.

2. Crop eradication. Although crop substitution has been attempted, recent emphasis is on crop eradication. Substitution failed because even subsidized no substitute crop could match the income obtained by growing illicit drugs. The State Department Bureau of International Narcotics Affairs has an authorized budget of \$101 million for FY 1989, most of which will go for crop eradication./41

3. Conditions on U.S. aid (Certification programs). To motivate source and transit country drug reduction efforts, eligibility for up to 50% of U.S. foreign aid can be withdrawn if positive performance in narcotics control is not demonstrated.

4. Support to International Organizations. Financial support is provided to narcotics control efforts of the U.N. and the Organization of American States. Most efforts are directed at

training and rehabilitation, although creation of international anti-narcotics forces is under consideration./42

Examination of basic strategy options suggests the current counter-drug strategy is inconsistent with other U.S. regional security objectives and overall U.S. interests.

Options

1. No change to existing strategy.

No change to the current strategy and its implementing programs seems to promise no change to the current result: expanding drug production and trafficking, cheaper drugs on U.S. streets, and conditions in nations to our south deteriorating with greater governmental instability and failing democracies. More of the same is not the answer.

2. Better resource the present strategy.

It can be argued that present efforts are failing not because of a poor strategy, but because insufficient means have been provided to execute the strategy properly. There is some merit to this argument. The strength of the opposition -- well-organized, heavily armed, well-financed, and secure, dispersed over more than an entire continent -- cannot easily or cheaply be overcome.

The present level of effort is inadequate and more resources would help.

But simply increasing resources won't work for two reasons. First, substantially increased resources will be difficult to obtain. Section 4502 of the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act declared that suppression of international narcotics trafficking is among the most important foreign policy objectives of the United States. That same well-publicized pre-election legislation authorized \$2.8 billion in additional anti-drug program spending. Confronted with fiscal reality in the form of Gramm-Rudman, however, Congress was able to find only \$479 million additional to support its ideas for FY 1989./43 Additionally, most of the new funding is directed at domestic demand reduction and strengthening border interdiction. In the present U.S. budget climate the issue of whether existing programs in source and transit countries are under-resourced is almost academic. If the programs depend on substantially more money to make them work, they are doomed -- because the money is simply not available.

Second, the present strategy has serious conceptual and operational flaws that more

resources will not cure. Although the implicit strategy objective is targeting drugs at their "source", the strategy does not focus on the centers of gravity of the enemy. It applies typical law enforcement solutions to what has become a low intensity war. Further, some of these "solutions" conflict with other regional security objectives. Crop eradication exemplifies the weaknesses. Fields of coca are not really the "source" of illicit drugs, and peasants who cultivate the fields are not the "enemy". The enemy is the trafficking organizations, and enemy centers of gravity are money and security to operate, not coca farms. Stepping up eradication may temporarily interfere with production, but production will not cease as long as cartels can finance new fields. Eradication is also counter-productive politically for the United States and the host nation. All the environmental impact statements EPA can produce will not convince a local population that aerial spraying of chemicals strong enough to kill plants will not harm people too. Why do we believe environmental sensitivities elsewhere are less important than in our own country? Local insurgents capitalize on these environmental concerns, as well as on the

loss of local income eradication programs cause. Eradication separates already weak democracies from their own citizens, instead of strengthening the governments - our avowed policy goal.

3. Shift the major emphasis to reducing U.S. demand.

There is no doubt that U.S. demand is the economic engine pulling the drug train down south. Reducing demand at home by education, targeting users as well as traffickers, and tougher civil and criminal enforcement is certain to impact positively and should be vigorously pursued. But it is equally certain that such measures will not completely eliminate U.S. demand for illicit drugs, so the need to suppress production will remain.

The notion that demand completely drives supply is not entirely accurate. Supply can influence demand; it probably has increased demand for illicit drugs. As supplies expand, prices come down and people who were priced out of a market at higher levels come into it. With addictive products they may be in the market for good, even if prices rise again./44 U.S. demand reduction may also be offset by demand growth in Europe and

the Latin nations themselves. The cartels are marketeers; they will sell to whomever they can. Latin democracies need and deserve our help in eliminating the cartels, regardless of the U.S. demand.

4. Quit the Fight (Legalization).

As an alternative approach to the U.S. drug problem, legalization would integrate what is now illicit production into regular business and government channels. Legalization was given recent credibility in the United States when Kurt Schmoke, the mayor of Baltimore and a former federal prosecutor, advanced it as a policy proposal. The issue was highlighted on national television in prime time in September 1988 on the Koppel Report./45 Oversimplified, arguments in favor of legalization assert that the drug war has failed, further expansion of the war is futile, alcohol and cigarettes have been legalized successfully, and legalization would increase government revenues and reduce expenses. Counter-arguments rebut that one does not legalize poison, alcohol and cigarette policies are in fact public health failures, and it is not in the American character to surrender to criminals.

Congress is on record opposing legalization and polls suggest 90% of the American people oppose it. Most proponents of legalization don't argue legalization is a good idea; they are simply looking for another solution because we are not winning the "war". Civic fatigue is the problem; the underlying moral value of America's opposition to illicit drugs is unchallenged. However, the legalization question for the Americas goes beyond whether the United States can sustain civic and political will to fight drugs. The issue is whether we can forge the will to fight drug trafficking in other nations, most of which are economically depressed and whose people obtain significant revenue from drug cultivation. The "people's will" in the drug war must encompass the people of source and transit nations. This can only occur if the governments involved can offer reasonable security and economic opportunity to their citizens, who will then oppose disruption of that security and opportunity by the violence and corruption of the traffickers. Carlos Andres Peres, the President of Venezuela, has referred to drug traffickers as the true breachers of Latin sovereignty./46 U.S. counter-drug strategy should help develop and reinforce such thinking.

5. Revised Strategy

Given the problems outlined above, a substantially revised strategy seems desirable. Before launching it, however, we need to explore for a moment some concepts familiar to the theory of war cited in the introduction.

THE GOAL

"Never flinch, never weary, never despair."

Sir Winston Churchill /47

Moral ascendancy is no substitute for resources, but it is every bit as essential for victory. It has no fixed definition but strength of will comes close. It is not identical to moral purpose but cannot succeed without the moral force that flows from our values./48 It is that absolute conviction one will prevail, matched equally by the certainty of ultimate defeat in one's enemy. Moral ascendancy means never flinching, never wearying, never despairing because of unshakeable confidence in the ultimate outcome. Moral ascendancy thus asserts the worth or value of a war and determines its most favorable result.

Achieving moral ascendancy requires that the will of the people, the government, and the commander and his army be united in conviction. For the drug war in the Americas, it means sustaining the will of the American people to combat the drug scourge, forging a similar will in the other nations of our hemisphere, and then converting that joint will into actions that convince the cartels, leaders and followers, they will be defeated and democratic governments will prevail.

Speaking of drugs at his inaugural President Bush stated, "This scourge will stop."/49 That promise must be fulfilled; and it can be.

TOWARD MORAL ASCENDENCY

Building a strategy that can gain moral ascendancy in the drug war down south can be done, though not easily. It requires consideration of Clausewitz's "remarkable trinity" of the government, the commander and his army and the people, as well as the imperatives of low intensity conflict. Paradoxically, the first logical measure toward moral ascendancy in the drug war may be to deemphasize certain U.S. sponsored counter-drug programs.

The Government

Clausewitz refers to "the government" as part of his trinity because he saw war as an instrument of policy, and setting political aims the business of government./50 The stated political aim of U.S. international narcotics control efforts is to "motivate" and "assist" source and transit country production reduction efforts./51 The objective is to "reduce the production and trafficking of illicit drugs in order to destroy the international drug cartels."/52 To further this strategy, State Department narcotics policy assigns its highest priority to reducing cultivation and production through eradication./53

This approach is deficient. First, it is not capable of destroying the enemy. The cartels are the enemy and the aim of war should be "what its very concept implies - to defeat the enemy."/54 Unfortunately, there is scant hope of destroying cartels with a strategy that does not focus on money and security, the cartel centers of gravity. Second, even if the political aim of international commitment to reduction of narcotics production is achieved, the commitment will have no permanent impact if the governments we "motivate and assist" become, in the process, too weak to destroy the cartels. Because of adverse local impacts, eradication weakens Latin governments. Our political aim ought to be to strengthen the governments that serve as our proxies in the drug war. Supporting democracy and development needs to take primacy. Beyond the eradication issue, if the greatest threat to a democracy is from insurgents not drug traffickers, we should help support government counter-insurgent programs. We can seek to exploit links between insurgents and traffickers; their trafficking connections may ultimately undermine insurgent claims to legitimacy. We can help visibly or covertly, whichever is better for the nation involved.

"The Commander and the Army"

The ability to influence events in war," the scope which the play of courage and talent will enjoy in the realm of probability and chance," depends on the character of the commander and the army./55 In the various bilateral arenas of the drug war both the U.S. and host nation "commanders and armies " have proven deficient. Police forces are often ill-trained and equipped to take on the insurgent-linked, terrorist enemy they face. Recent high level concern has been expressed about U.S. DEA agents operating in an environment of jungle guerrilla warfare and suggestions made that military personnel be substituted./56 The concern is well-founded, but substituting "cross-designated" Special Forces personnel as special DEA agents as the congressional study recommends is not the answer. Nor is creation of international and regional forces under U.N. or OAS auspices as was recently urged by Congress. The concepts miss the mark. The forces of host nation democratic governments must be credible and robust enough to take on the cartels. The "majicos" should be put in prison by host nation officials, not extradited to the United States or arrested by the U.N. The military is the real power base in many Latin nations, potentially it is the best source of strength to fight the cartels. The military is also the best potential guarantor of Latin democracy. Leaving hemisphere armies undertrained

and underresourced against insurgents or traffickers is counterproductive in the long run. We need to take the risk of giving democratic governments aid that strengthens military and other internal security forces so they can protect their own people. Because of human rights violations in certain countries we have been reluctant to take such risks in the past. We need to continue to emphasize human rights but some risk taking seems in order if we are serious about our drug war.

"The People"

Clausewitz reminds us that the "passions that are to be kindled in war must already be inherent in the people."/57 This applies not just to the American people but to the people in each country where the drug war is being fought. They too must believe in the fight and be willing to sacrifice for it, a goal not easy to achieve.

Until recently, lack of anti-drug passion was a problem in the United States. In the 1960's and 1970's, we exhibited great social tolerance for illegal drugs. Mixed signals on the physical, moral and legal consequences attached to illicit drug use were prevalent. Hollywood glamorized marijuana; likewise cocaine and other drug use was portrayed as sophisticated. College and high school

students, including one future Supreme Court nominee, experimented with illegal drugs. Drug dealers became role models for youth who admired the dealers' flashy economic success in stark contrast to their own poverty and lack of status.

Fortunately, these attitudes changed in the 1980's as the adverse health and community impacts of spreading addiction became apparent. Public tolerance for illegal drugs eroded. Americans are now alarmed by the drug problem and want it fixed. However, this new intolerant attitude is not yet universally shared outside the United States. In many source countries, drugs are an economic positive and the drug "problem" is a Yanqui problem. Just as forging a consensus on the drug problem took time and education in the United States, it will take much effort in Latin countries and different strategies than are now being pursued.

Asking peasants who are hungry and whose children suffer to forfeit jobs to keep cocaine off the streets of Washington is asking a lot. The better approach is indirect. Economic advancement, self-determination and freedom from fear are universal aspirations. Drug dealers and terrorists are linked with fear; self determination and economic growth are best advanced by capitalist democracies. Strengthening democracies, helping them become economically viable, and empowering them to provide security for their people can

provide a base for the political will to support anti-drug programs. A "Marshall Plan" for the Americas would go a long way toward solving U. S. domestic drug problems.

Low Intensity Conflict(LIC) Imperatives

For a number of reasons, including the economic competition, enemy terrorist tactics and trafficker links to insurgents, the counter-drug conflict environment down south resembles LIC. LIC doctrinal imperatives are designed to provide practical guidelines for ambiguous and highly politicized "war". The imperatives stress political dominance, unity of effort, adaptability, legitimacy and patience. LIC doctrine further emphasizes internal defense and balanced development./58

Even a cursory application of these notions to our present counter-drug strategy highlights problems. How does crop eradication contribute to political dominance? How do U.S. supported drug raids such as "Blast Furnace" promote local government legitimacy? What contributions do either of these efforts make to the security of local inhabitants? LIC imperatives should be used to test counter-drug strategy concepts and right now they don't support the way we are going.

Moral Ascendency

When "majicos" can't sleep at night and must fear for their freedom, and when those who would challenge them do so without fear of retribution, moral ascendency will be within reach. However, some very serious obstacles must be overcome to reach this objective :

1. Noriega must go. As long as this general sits on his de facto throne in Panama, he sends the message that the U.S. cannot win the drug war. He is highly visible and painfully symbolic of the ineffectiveness of the United States anti-drug campaign. Panama provides a classic example of the conflict between the desire to fight drugs and other national security objectives -- in this instance, preservation of access through the Panama canal. The long-term outcome of this confrontation is unclear, but Manuel Noriega shows no sign of accommodating U.S. desires that he accede to some face-saving(for us) compromise and get out of Panama. Shortly before he left office President Reagan referred to Noriega as part of the drug fraternity and said reconsideration of our treaties was something to look at./59 It should be. Noriega is a tough case but our hand is tipped and our cards are out on the world table. No waffling will take us around the problem. Until Noriega pays a price, moral ascendency in the drug war is out of reach.

2. Other high cartel leaders must be brought to justice. The majicos must live in fear, not the judges, newspaper editors and politicians who dare to challenge them. It makes little sense to spend millions on crop eradication and drug factory raids that punish peasants struggling to provide for their families while the drug lords sit in their haciendas raising horses and counting their money. Trickle-up is no way to fight a war. Until "majicos" fall regularly, moral ascendancy is out of reach.

3. Crop eradication should be dropped as a U.S. counter-drug initiative. Insurgents exploit it, the environmental issues are explosive, and replanting is too easily accomplished. Other avenues of approach against the cartels' financial center of gravity, such as demand reduction, better controls on money transfer and laundering, civil asset seizures and so forth, are preferable and should be emphasized.

4. Extradiction to the U.S. should be dropped as a major policy aim. Strengthening local justice systems should be the goal. The sovereignty and strength of their own government needs to be visible to people. Former Secretary of State

George Schultz stated "Democracy is not the easiest path but surely the best."/60 The same applies here. We have to place more trust in those we call allies. One caveat to this extradition philosophy might be considered. If high level government corruption in a host nation precludes enforcement action against high level traffickers, we should reserve the option to abduct the traffickers to the United States for trial. Treat them like terrorists. Advisors to President Bush have been quoted as suggesting that the administration will seek to expand CIA covert efforts to take terrorists into captivity, disrupt their logistics and operations, and turn them against one another./61 Although abduction from other states might violate international law, the legal advisor to the Department of State has defended extralegal methods of capture in extreme cases./62 We should preserve this option, while generally favoring national justice.

The Role of the American Military

Much current debate goes on about how involved in the drug war the military should become, but much of that debate misses the issue. If the narcotics control strategy for source and transit countries is flawed, and more resources alone won't solve the problem, more military support to law enforcement won't change the equation. We don't need to substitute military raiders for the DEA in the jungle coca fields of Peru; we don't need to be there. Drug lords aren't out in the jungle, they are home raising Paso Fino horses and counting money.

The most valuable contributions the American military can make in the drug war down south become clearer if the focus is on democracy, and development -- and then on drugs. Instead of the primary mission of "supporting law enforcement", the principal military role in the drug war should be expanded foreign internal defense and support for nation building.

The U.S. military should lend support to democracy. This can be done first by expanding dramatically the education of Latin military in the United States, where they can not only gain technical skills but can assimilate some democratic values. Second, we should expand training of Latin military and police forces by U.S. forces both in host

countries and in regional training centers. These forces can then provide better security for their people and better take on the cartels. Intelligence and operations planning are areas worthy of training emphasis. Third, we should expand and stabilize overall security assistance to improve the capability for counter-insurgency as well as counter-trafficking operations. Money saved by cancelling eradication programs could provide some funding. Fourth, we should expand military humanitarian and civic assistance programs and teach Latin military organizations how to do the same./63 Drug lords should not be the only dispensers of social services to some of the rural disadvantaged. Congressional restrictions which hamper providing all these types of aid need to be reviewed. If we say we support democracy, we should support it in a meaningful way or pack up and go home.

The Conclusion-Fight For Freedom Not Just Against Drugs

To successfully defeat the well-organized, well-armed, well-financed enemy we and our allies face in the drug war down south, we need to be more visible supporting democracy and economic development. We need to limit counter-drug programs that take jobs directly from the poor. We need to work harder at strengthening democracies militarily so those governments can better protect their own citizens. We need

to help eliminate the security and freedom of action the drug lords now enjoy and substantially reduce their money flow to the cartels through demand reduction, money controls and asset seizures. We need to help better identify and root out the government corruption that may be the greatest obstacle to ultimate victory. Overall, we need a more indirect approach to the illicit drug "supply" problem than is now favored. But it is the road to moral ascendancy, more consistent with our national interests and more likely to work.

We should change our focus a bit and then "never flinch, never weary, never despair."

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